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SECRET

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CITE TDCS DB-315/02666-66

DIST 21 SEPTEMBER 1966

COUNTRY: INDIA/VIETNAM

DOI : 13 SEPTEMBER 1966

SUBJECT: NORTH VIETNAMESE AIDE MEMOIRE GIVEN TO INDIA ON INTENTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES IN VIETNAM. COMMENTS OF INDIAN OFFICIAL ON PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN VIETNAM.

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ACQ :

SOURCE :

[redacted]

1. SUMMARY. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (GOI) HAS RECEIVED AN AIDE MEMOIRE FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT WHICH STATES THE UNITED

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STATES IS PREPARING TO OCCUPY THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE (DZ) AND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FORTHCOMING SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES IN RESPECT TO VIETNAM.

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2. [redacted]

A. [redacted] THE MAIN POINTS IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE ARE:

1) THE UNITED STATES IS MAKING PREPARATIONS TO OCCUPY THE DZ AND ALSO TO LAND TROOPS IN NORTH VIETNAM COASTAL AREAS AND TO BLOCKADE HAIPHONG PORTS. TO COVER UP THESE SINISTER PREPARATIONS AND THEIR DELIBERATE ESCALATION OF THE WAR, AND ALSO TO DECEIVE U.S. OPINION IN THE ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER, AMERICA IS CREATING CONFUSION AND VAGUENESS IN WORLD PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT THEIR DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS OF THIS CONFLICT.

2). THERE ARE SOME SIGNS THAT AMERICA WANTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE COMING 21ST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BRING THIS MATTER OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT TO THE U.N. TO SUIT ITS COMING DECEITFUL

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"PEACE CAMPAIGN".

3) THE DRVN GOVERNMENT HOLDS THE VIEW THAT THE PROBLEM OF VIETNAM COULD ONLY BE SOLVED ON THE BASIS OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENT. THE FOUR POINT STAND OF THE DRVN GOVERNMENT IS MERELY A CONCENTRATED REAFFIRMATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND MAIN PROVISIONS OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENT. THE DRVN GOVERNMENT REFUTES ALL EFFORTS AND SCHEMES TO USE THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERFERENCE IN VIETNAM. THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT IS AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WHICH IT IS THE DUTY OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO RESPECT RATHER THAN FOR THE BODY TO INTERVENE DIRECTLY. THE DRVN GOVERNMENT THEREFORE HOPES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WILL STOP ALL MANEUVERS AIMED AT USING THE UNITED NATIONS TO INTERFERE IN THE VIETNAM PROBLEM AND ALSO HOPES THAT INDIA WILL CONDEMN THE UNITED STATES' AGGRESSIVE WAR IN VIETNAM AND SUPPORT THE JUST STRUGGLE OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE FOR "INDEPENDENCE, PEACE, UNITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AS LAID DOWN IN THE 1954 GENEVA AGREEMENT".

B. [redacted]

D) [redacted] INDIA WAS VERY ANXIOUS THAT THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE DZ BE RETAINED. [redacted] IT HAS A

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CERTAIN SYMBOLIC CHARACTER AND THAT THE AREA COULD BE KEPT FULLY NEUTRALIZED UNDER PROPER SUPERVISION OF THE ICC. THIS WILL HAVE POSITIVE RESULTS EVEN THOUGH THIS ONLY RELATES TO ONE ASPECT OF THE CONFLICT. [redacted] THERE WERE NO INSURMOUNTABLE DIFFICULTIES FOR CONTROL AND SUPERVISION BY THE ICC. THIS WAS POSSIBLE PROVIDED THERE WAS COOPERATION FROM BOTH SIDES AND PARTICULARLY A GUARANTEE OF SAFETY FOR THE ICC TEAMS OPERATING ON THE DRVN SIDE OF THE DZ. SUCH A GUARANTEE WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE OF THE NEUTRALITED ZONE.

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2) [redacted] THE DRVN ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER ANY REASONABLE SUGGESTION FROM THE COMMISSION TO MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF THE DZ. THIS COULD BE PUT DIRECT TO THEM BY THE ARMY LIAISON MISSION. HOWEVER, THE QUESTION OF RETAINING THE SANCTITY OF THE DZ HAS TO BE LOOKED AT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BASIC PROBLEM OF CONTINUED AMERICAN AGGRESSION AND PRESENCE IN VIETNAM AND SHOULD BE SEEN IN THAT CONTEXT.

3) AMPLIFYING THE HANOI GOVERNMENT'S REJECTION OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S OFFER TO FIX A DATE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES IF NORTH VIETNAM AGRESSION IS STOPPED, [redacted] THEY HAVE BEEN WILLING TO CONSIDER ANY FRUITFUL SUGGESTIONS

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AND IN FACT HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN IN CONTACT WITH AMERICA DURING THIS PERIOD THROUGH SOME REPRESENTATIVES. THE VIETNAMESE SEE NO SIGNS OF DE-ESCALATION IN JOHNSON'S PEACE OFFERS; ON THE CONTRARY THEY ARE FULLY CONVINCED THAT THE PEACE OFFERS AND THE WITHDRAWAL OFFERS ARE ALL A PART OF THE AMERICAN STRATEGY TO CONTINUE TO RETAIN ITS HOLD ON VIETNAM. HENCE THEY HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO COMPLETELY REJECT THE PROPOSALS.

4) [redacted]

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C. SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AS A RESULT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS [redacted] ARE AS

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FOLLOWS:

1) THE NORTH VIETNAMESE STILL FEEL CONVINCED THAT TIME IS WORKING FOR THEM AND THAT EVEN THE CLOSEST ALLIES OF THE UNITED STATES ARE INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF U.S. ACTIONS. [redacted]

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2) ACCORDING TO EAST EUROPEANS, THE VIETNAMESE, WHO ARE VERY SECRETIVE EVEN TO THEIR CLOSEST ALLIES, HAVE BEEN MAKING FEELERS TO THE SOVIETS TO EXPLORE PEACE PROSPECTIVES WITHOUT ACTUALLY SAYING SO. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS FOR THEIR OWN PART ARE ANXIOUS THAT REASONABLE SUGGESTIONS OR OFFERS BY AMERICA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A GOOD GROUND FOR THE VIETNAMESE TO COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS. THE WITHDRAWAL BY AMERICA WITHIN A FIXED PERIOD, PRECEDED BY GENERAL AGREEMENT , IS CONSIDERED BY THE SOVIETS AS A FAIR BASIS FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS. THEY HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN INHIBITED FROM ASSERTING PRESSURES OR INFLUENCE ON THE VIETNAMESE DUE TO THE BLACKMAIL TACTICS OF THE CHINESE. THEY HAVE STATED FRANKLY THAT THESE ARE THEIR LIMITING FACTORS IN THEIR CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE THE VIETNAMESE. THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA, IN WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN BLATANTLY ATTACKED AND ABUSED BY THE CHINESE, ACCORDING TO SOME OBSERVERS, WOULD MAKE THE SOVIETS MUCH LESS SENSITIVE TO CHINESE TACTICS TO BLACKEN THEM. WITH THE NEW SITUATION ARISING FROM THE CHINESE ATTACKS, THE SOVIET UNION MAY BE INCLINED TO EXERCISE MORE PRESSURE AND INFLUENCE ON VIETNAM TO GO IN FOR PEACE TALKS IN SPITE OF WHAT THE CINESE MAY SAY OR DO. IN THIS CONTEXT IT SEEMS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THAT AMERICA SHOULD MAKE THE TASK EASY FOR ANY OPPORTUNITY IN DUE COURSE. THE SOVIETS MAY

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BE INCLINED TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE VIETNAMESE FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

3). THE VIETNAMSE HAVE OFFICIALLLY REJECTED JOHNSON'S OFFER TO WITHDRAW FROM VIETNAM SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS. THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY. A DEADLINE DECLARATION OF, LET'S SAY, THREE YEARS FOR THE AMERICANS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY, SUBJECT TO A GENERAL CONDITION THAT PEACE AND ACCORD IS REACHED WELL BEFORE THE TIME LIMIT, COULD STILL LEAD THE WAY TO NEGOTIATIONS AND SETTLEMENT. THE PREVIOUS DECLARATION BY JOHNSON LAID DOWN SOME HARSH CONDITIONS ABOUT ENDING OF "AGRESSION BY NORTH VIETNAM". THE WHOLE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE DRVN HIERARCHY IS LIKELY TO BE THREATENED IF THERE IS AN ACCEPTANCE OF PEACE TERMS INVOLVING LOSS OF FACE OR PRESTIGE AND THEREFORE IS UNLIKELY TO BE ACCEPTED BY THEM. FOR TACTICAL REASONS, THE WITHDRAWAL DECLARATION BY AMERICA MAY BE LINKED WITH "THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AND ACCORD BEFORE SUCH WITHDRAWAL". TO CONNECT THIS AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL WITH STOPPING OF "AGGRESSION BY NORTH VIETNAM" WOULD OBVIOUSLY NOT FIND AN EASY ACCEPTANCE FROM NORTH VIETNAM.

3. FIELD DISSEM. STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMSM1 CINCPACFLT CINCPACAF CINCUSARPAC [redacted]

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